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Remarks
by
U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh Dan Mozena
Youth and Environmental Activism in Khulna and the
Sunderbans

Khulna University Auditorium

May 9, 2012

Professor Md. Saifuddin Shah, Vice Chancellor, Khulna University

U.S. International Visitors Leadership Program Alumni

Md. Shamir Shehab, President of the Bangladesh Youth Environmental Initiative and winner of the 2011 U.S. State Department Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund Grant

Students who share my passion for preserving the environment

Good evening to all ...

What a fascinating and riveting discussion!

I am encouraged that young people are so committed to preserving the environment ...

... to preserving this wondrous, beautiful country.

As I criss-cross this nation in my campaign to visit all 64 districts, I am struck by the diversity and beauty of Bangladesh ... this nation is dazzling ... from the tea gardens of Sylhet ...

... to the rich plains of Rajshahi ... to the wonders of Khulna ... to the rugged beauty of the Chittagong Hill Tracts ... to the beaches of Cox's Bazar ... the nation is spectacularly beautiful.

But the beauty of Bangladesh and the nation's environment is under threat ...

You know the challenges ... destruction of habitat, pollution of waterways and air, unfettered growth without concern for the impact on the environment, and the ravages of frequent natural disasters.

You, the youth, the leaders of today and of tomorrow, you face a heavy burden ...

... to you falls the task of safeguarding the natural treasures of Bangladesh for the next generation and the next.

In shouldering this burden, you are indeed fortunate.

Your friends, your colleagues, your fellow citizens are with you ... for they, too, seek to preserve the nation while fostering the economic growth needed to improve the quality of life for all.

I am pleased that America is your partner ... through the integrated land management programs, through cookstove and clean energy initiatives, and through the International Visitors Leadership Program and the Innovation Fund grants from which young people in this room directly benefited.

Yes, America is your partner ...

Again, thank you for this most instructive evening.

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